

On Top Of The News

Email: news@arubatoday.com

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Monday, July 13, 2009

INSIDE TODAY

PEOP & ARTS

MJ MURDERED???



Michael Jackson was killed by a band of greedy hangers-on, his sister La Toya alleged in interviews with British Sunday newspapers. The King of Pop's sister spoke about her younger brother's death and the aftermath with The Mail on Sunday and the News of the World weeklies. "I believe Michael was murdered, I felt that from the start," the 53-year-old said.

(AFP/Getty Images/File)  
Page A14

**WORLD NEWS**

**Honduran president ousted**



A boy raises his arms behind a banner with an image of Isys Obed Murillo during a demonstration of supporters of ousted Honduras' President Manuel Zelaya honoring Murillo in Tegucigalpa, Saturday, July 11, 2009. Murillo, 19, was killed Sunday during clashes with police officers and soldiers in Tegucigalpa during a demonstration in support of Zelaya.

(AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd)  
Page B2

*Step by Step presents "La Fille Mal Gardee"*

## Owner Sonja celebrates 40 years of teaching dance



By Jan Falcone  
Special to Aruba Today

ORANJESTAD - La Fille Mal Gardee is an original, comic ballet, over 200 years old, and the first one ever to tell a story. This year, the owner of Step by Step dance school, Sonja Gevers, selected this ballet to present for the school's annual recital, because Sonja is celebrating this year, 40 years of teaching ballet. It



was a wonderful production - enjoyable indeed and even the smallest dancers were included in the recital this year.

The classical ballet, jazz,

tap, folkloric, and recently added street dance numbers were all excellent, and it was such a fun show to watch. The enthusiastic audience really loved and screamed

their applause at the end of two tap numbers, especially Cotton-Eye Joe, performed again this year because of its popularity last year.

*Continued on Pages 8 & 9*



## Heineken & I Love Muzika Green Village was an awesome success

SAN NICOLAS - Heineken and I Love Muzika productions teamed up again to deliver yet another much anticipated installment of Heineken Green City.

The whole main street of San Nicolas was closed off on Saturday Night featuring 3 Areas with all music imaginable with a GREAT line up. The line up included bands and DJ'S like: Le Groove, Basic One, Datapanik, Isis Band, Dj Funky Junction (milan/miami), THEO SANDERS, DJ PACO (Curacao), EXIDE MUSIC, DJ BIG RIG and much more.

*Continued on Next Page*

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## Green Village was an awesome success



*Continued from Front Page*  
Besides the musical artists the street was chock full entertainers and best of all there was a never ending supply of HEINEKEN ALL NIGHT!

Congratulations to all the sponsors and entertainers for making an evening in San Nicolas for all to enjoy. A special thanks to Heineken & I Love Muzika □



As Ambassadors of Goodwill

# Dene & Sherry Harper recognized at the Divi Village



ORANESTAD - Recently at the Divi Village vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry

of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for more than 20 consecutive years. Special

friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those

## ALOHA BRIDGE CLUB ARUBA RESULTS THURSDAY,

9 JULY 2009

ORANJESTAD - On Thursday morning a total of 11 pairs attended the bridge session at the Members Lounge of the Aruba Beach Club Resort. Jeanette and Jack Keyser joined the group as guest players.

The results 50% and higher are as follows:

- 1 Cornelia Sloterdijk / Els Laele 67.71 %
- 2 Joke Henriquez / Annette Ybeles 61.98 %
- 3 Ghislaine Mendes / Iola Tjin 59.38 %
- 4 Nelly Aal / Gerry Meenhorst 53.65 %
- 5 Katy Yarzagaray / Lorraine Wright 52.50 %
- 6 Geke In 't Veld / Stascha Hornix 51.88 %.

RESULTS FRIDAY, 10 JULY 2009

A total of 10 pairs joined the bridge session on Friday evening at the Frank Conway Room of Casa del Mar. Marieke Houwerts joined the group as guestplayer.

The results 50% and higher are as follows:

- 1 Annette Ybeles / Geke In



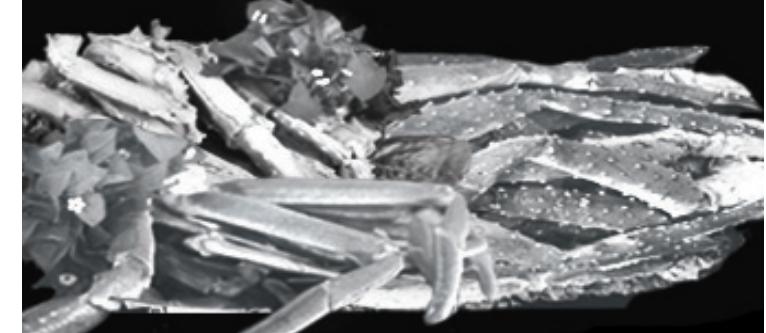
with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of Goodwill title.

The recent honoring were effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Mandy Lopez at the Divi Village they call their home away from

home. Dene and Sherry Harper were honored as Ambassadors of Goodwill after visiting Aruba for 28 years.

Present for the Ceremony were General Manager Gerrit Griffith and Activities Coordinator Gloria Defoe. □

## MONDAY'S CRAB NIGHT



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## Members of the Second Chamber profiled

~ *Chairman Van Beek: the soothing factor in NAAZ* ~

THE HAGUE--His calmness and gentlemanly qualities come in handy when chairing the Second Chamber's Permanent Committee of Antillean and Aruban Affairs NAAZ meetings - Willibrord van Beek. Colleagues in Parliament appreciate his qualities and just last week he won the Second Chamber's 2009 courtesy award.

As behoves a good chairman, Member of Parliament (MP) of the liberal democratic VVD party Van Beek (60) tries to keep meetings of the NAAZ committee businesslike and to the point. That is not always easy because some members have a custom of making accusations and sometimes emotions can run high. The Second Chamber has the last say in the process of constitutional reform and members consider that a sacred right.

Van Beek was appointed chairman of the NAAZ committee some five years ago. Before Van Beek's time there had been several changes in chairmanship. "They were looking for someone who could contribute to the committee's stability and continuity. I was arrogant enough to say that I could do that," said Van Beek who, until he became a member of NAAZ, had been to Curaçao once to visit his daughter who at the time did an internship on the island. Van Beek has been an MP since May 1998 and active in politics since 1978.

"I wanted to make serious work of it. Plus, the advantage of this job is that you actually get the chance to get involved by visiting the islands," said Van Beek, who admitted that

occasionally colleagues do make fun of these travels. But that doesn't bother the chairman. "In the meantime I have become well-acquainted with the islands and I have learnt a lot about how politics works in the Dutch Kingdom."

Fall in love

According to Van Beek it is very hard not to fall in love with the islands. "That love grows on you. Committee members naturally build a relationship with the islands," said Van Beek who, together with NAAZ's vice-chairman John Leerdam is visiting Aruba and Curaçao this month in connection with the Kingdom Games in Aruba.

The atmosphere in NAAZ has become harsher over the years with Members of Parliament regularly being accused by the islands of meddling - getting involved in internal matters. Van Beek said that members sometimes wanted to be involved in more issues than were prescribed in the Charter, like the environment and prison. These issues are actually matters of the Antillean Government or the Island Territory and not of Dutch Parliament, he added.

Bad intentions

Van Beek doesn't think the members always have bad intentions when they pose questions or make certain remarks. Many of these questions and remarks are the result of "genuine" interest or concern, he said. It is with this in mind that NAAZ members usually visit the Isla refinery or the Bon Futuro prison in Curaçao. "We want to talk about these issues, share our concerns. We too want things to improve. It doesn't have to

do with meddling. But we have to realise that internal matters are not a Kingdom issue. That creates tension at times," he said.

According to Van Beek, the doubts of most committee members about St. Maarten's capacity to attain country status in a year or two also have to do with wanting the best for the island and its people. "You get discussions like should we not give them (St. Maarten, ed.) a bit more time. Members say that with good intentions. I understand that there are different opinions and feelings on both sides of the ocean."

Different approach

St. Maarten has to comply with a set of conditions before it can become an autonomous country in the Dutch Kingdom. St. Maarten says things should be in order on paper, while the Netherlands has an entirely different approach, maintaining that the country system has to properly function before anything. "That is a difference of a phase. The question is how much space you offer to solve this, to make it work. We run into things like integrity," he said.

Van Beek agrees that the Netherlands Antilles needs to be eliminated as the extra layer. Then again, Dutch Parliament has to deal with the fact that its traditional conversation partners, the Central Government and the Antillean Parliament, are eliminated with the dismantling of the Netherlands Antilles. Van Beek said he always tries to explain the viewpoints of Dutch Parliament. "If the relationship is good, there is

more room to operate. If there's tension, the space gets tight. As chairman of NAAZ, I have to keep monitoring these things," he said.

Aruba investigation

Relations between the Netherlands and Aruba are pretty tight at the moment. The First and Second Chamber have asked State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten to carry out an investigation into the state of affairs in that island. The investigation comes at a time when Aruba is preparing for its national elections on September 25. "An integrity investigation is a difficult issue during elections. I understand that," said Van Beek.

Van Beek said space and understanding needed to be created in cases like this, to avoid escalation. "Investigations always create tension, especially in times of elections." Integrity however is a vital matter, which always needs to be investigated if there's reason to do so. Van Beek said such an investigation could also take away doubts and suspicions.

He said Dutch politicians should not always judge the islands according to Western European standards. "We need to take into account the differences in mentality, culture and temperature. We need to have understanding for the fact that things are done differently there," he said.

The democratic deficit and finding a solution to this inequality in the Kingdom is important to Van Beek, even though it is felt "much more on the other side of the ocean." But the solution should not be

too complicated. "The solution should not become a bigger problem than it is now," he said. Van Beek doesn't expect the Democratic Deficit Committee under the chairmanship of Deputy Minister Plenipotentiary Mavis Brooks-Salmon to come up with an entirely new proposal. "It is about making a political choice, one that we all can live with. There has to be space for that."

What does the Kingdom mean to Van Beek? "It means we belong together. The question for me is not whether we belong, but rather how. That is why I protested against the remarks by the PVV (Party for Freedom, ed.) that we should sell the islands. Independence is not a decision for the Netherlands to take. Besides, we cannot pretend that we don't share hundreds of years of history." □



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At the Aruba Beach Club

## Aruba recognizes Michael & Barbara Levy



ORANESTAD - Recently at the Aruba Beach Club vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for more than 20 consecutive years. Special friends of

Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of goodwill title. The recent

honoring were effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Mandy Lopez at the Aruba Beach Club they call their home away from home. Michael & Barbara Levy were honored as Ambassadors of Goodwill after visiting Aruba for 26 years. □

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At the Holiday Inn

# Gunther & Susanne recognized as Ambassadors of Goodwill



ORANESTAD - Recently at the Holiday Inn Beach Resort vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for more than 20 consecutive years. Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual

vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of

Goodwill title. The recent honoring were effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Maritza Tromp Lacle at the Aruba Beach Club they call their home

away from home. Gunther & Susanne Bloy were honored as Ambassadors of Goodwill after visiting Aruba for 28 years. □

# Witnesses invite all to "Keep on the Watch!"

ORANJESTAD - Jehovah's Witnesses are launching a vigorous campaign to invite all to hear interesting discussions about the Bible's description of what many people refer to as the end of the world. Witnesses are convinced that each of their neighbors will be intrigued and even encouraged by what will be presented at the 2009 "Keep on the Watch!" District Convention to be held in English at the Cas di Cultura, in Aruba..

Starting this weekend and continuing for the next three weeks, Jehovah's Witnesses will extend a personal invitation to everyone from Aruba and Curacao to attend the three-day event in

Aruba that will begin Friday, July 24, 2009, at 9:20 a.m. The theme is based on several passages of the Bible, including Matthew 24:42 and Mark 13:37, where Jesus Christ instructed his followers to "keep on the watch." How the Bible illuminates and clarifies the import of those words for modern Bible readers will be the focus of the program. Admission to the convention is

free, and no collections will be taken. The Witnesses' campaign will include the distribution of an attractively illustrated invitation. This is similar to what they did in 2007 for their successful "Follow the Christ" District Convention. They hope to extend a personal invitation to as many people as possible.

Locally, all of the area's 33 Witness congregations will be supporting this concerted effort to increase awareness of the convention. An estimated more than 4,000 will come to the total of five conventions held on successive weekends.

Witnesses anticipate an excellent turnout for the event. They look forward to welcoming many non-Witnesses to the convention and believe that all who attend will benefit from the practical and timely information presented.

Throughout Aruba and Curaçao there will be 5 conventions. In the continental United States, there will be 319 conventions in 81 cities.

Worldwide, there are over 7,100,000 Witnesses in more than 103,000 congregations. □

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The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers up a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, homemade soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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Jumbled Chef Marc Henriquez is proudly presenting his rich platter with an 18oz Red Snapper or Grouper, a choice depending on the catch of that day. "Bugaloe is known for fun and craziness, so it was just a logical step for me to go crazy with this colorful pallet

of exquisite fish, yellow rice and rich vegetables," Chef Marc says. With a smile he adds "And that just for US\$ 20!"

And right he is, as the platter has been a hit from the start. Served with a bottle of white wine this fish feast is truly a delight on your Monday night.

**Bugaloe is located at De Palm Pier in Palm Beach between RIU Palace and Radisson Resort.**

#### OPENING HOURS

Bugaloe Beach Bar and Grill is open daily from 8am till midnight. You may go there for a casual lunch or dinner and on Mondays the special is served from 5:30pm till 10:00pm. Reservations are not needed... just follow the good music, the fun and the smiles on the beach and you will know where Bugaloe is.



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# Step by Step presents “La Fille Mal Gardee”



*Continued from Front Page*

Sonja finds that teaching dance is the most beautiful and fulfilling job that she could ever have, and thanked her husband Humphrey Lauffer, as well as her teachers at the school, Tracey Nicolaas, Desiree Scharbaay, and Valedy Sommerville,

all students themselves, as well as tap and jazz teacher Gayle Hagedoorn. Sonja also celebrated the many years of her Aruba Dance Formation, a folkloric group that performs regularly on the island. Step by Step has been in existence for seventeen years already, and is still going strong.

The school has produced over the years, several students who have decided to continue their education in dance after high school. Jasmayel Camacho, Diantha Maduro, Merel Lamboo, and Adiella Adamus are already overseas perfecting their craft.





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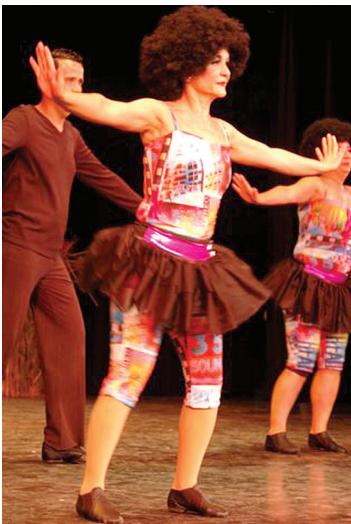
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There are 2 more to go at this point, ever inspired by Sonja and her dedication to dance and the proper teaching of dance students.

Thanks to some of the sponsors, Jads Dive Center of Seroe Colorado, Faarup Figaroa, Law offices, and many parents, a beautiful program was produced and given out upon entrance to the show.

Classes start up again on Sept. 5, at Step by Step on Schotlandstraat in Eagle, Oranjestad. □





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Have you heard about the new Factory?

## Trend Factory opens in the Eagle shopping district

By Jan Falcone

Special to Aruba Today

EAGLE - We all love the island and the relaxing lifestyle that comes with it. The Aruban climate allows us to maximize our living space and enjoy it to the fullest. One thing can be frustrating... where to find beautiful home accessories in today's fashion color schemes and trendy porch and garden furniture for a very reasonable price.

Trend Factory, a Spanish Franchise, collects

ideas, accessories and furniture from all over the world so you can make your home the way you like it. Every month we will bring in more and new stuff... so be sure to pass by regularly to follow up on the latest trends in home decoration.

See you soon!

The Trend Factory is located at the Schotlandstraat 49-A (next to Ezee Brothers) Opening hours are from Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 6 pm. □



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## Obesity emerges as risk factor in severe flu

By Maggie Fox,  
Health and Science Editor

WASHINGTON (Reuters)

— People who are obese but otherwise healthy may be at special risk of severe complications and death from the new H1N1 swine flu virus, U.S. researchers reported on Friday.

They described the cases of 10 patients at a Michigan hospital who were so ill they had to be put on ventilators. Three died. Nine of the 10 were obese, seven were severely obese, including two of the three who died. The study, published in advance in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's weekly report on death and disease, also suggests doctors can safely double the usual dose of oseltamivir, Roche AG's antiviral drug sold under the Tamiflu brand name.

"What this suggests is that there can be severe complications associated with this virus infection, especially in severely obese patients," said CDC virus expert Dr. Tim Uyeki.

"And five of these patients had ... evidence of blood clots in the lungs. This has not been previously known to occur in patients with severe influenza virus infections," Uyeki said in a telephone interview.

Dr. Lena Napolitano of the University of Michigan Medical Center and colleagues studied the cases of 10 patients admitted to the university's intensive care unit with severe acute respiratory distress syndrome caused by infection with H1N1.

"Of the 10 patients, nine were obese (body mass index more than 30), including seven who were extremely obese (BMI more than 40)," they wrote in their report.

Their study was not designed to see if obesity or anything else poses a special risk factor for flu. But the researchers were surprised to see that seven of the 10 patients were extremely obese.

### MULTIPLE ORGAN FAILURE

Nine had multiple organ failure, which can be seen in influenza, but five had blood clots in the lungs, and six had kidney failure. None has fully recovered, the researchers said.

The H1N1 swine flu virus first emerged in Mexico in March and was spreading out of control in the United States by the time it was identified at the end of April. The World Health Organization declared a pandemic in June.

While it is causing moderate illness, all influenza viruses can be deadly and this one is no exception. It has killed close to 500 people globally, more than 200 in the United States alone.

However, the new virus has a slightly different

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Pedestrians walk across the street near Times Square in New York August 28 2007.

REUTERS/Lucas Jackson

pattern from seasonal flu - it spreads in the summer months, attacks young adults and older children, and may affect the body slightly differently.

As with H5N1 avian influenza, which only rarely attacks people, patients seem to survive better if they get Tamiflu for longer than the usual five-day treatment course, Uyeki said.

"We don't know if it is necessary for a higher dose of the drug to be given to patients who are obese," he

said.

"The high prevalence of obesity in this case series is striking," the CDC's commentary accompanying the report reads.

"Whether obesity is an independent risk factor

for severe complications of novel influenza A (H1N1) virus infection is unknown. Obesity has not been identified previously as a risk factor for severe complications of seasonal influenza." □

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**BUSINESS****Aruba TODAY**

# Geithner to focus on investment, economic recovery

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER,  
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — On his first trip to the Middle East as Treasury Secretary, Timothy Geithner's message this week will be similar to the one he delivered to Chinese officials a month ago: your investments in the United States are safe. Geithner is expected to repeat assurances that the government's soaring budget deficits will not trigger a devastating bout of inflation that sinks the value of the dollar and foreigners' holdings. Geithner is scheduled to hold high-level meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday with top government officials and leading business executives in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

"We have a fiscal policy that will ultimately undermine the value of their holdings and that has got foreign investors nervous," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Economy.com. "They are seeking assurances that the U.S. is committed to dealing with its long-term deficit problems."

On Monday, the government is expected to announce that the deficit through the first nine months of this budget year hit an historic milestone in June, topping \$1 trillion.

Geithner will stress that the Obama administration is committed to bringing down the deficits once the country has emerged from the current recession and financial crisis, said a Treasury official, who

briefed reporters on condition of anonymity.

The trip also includes a stop in London on Monday to confer with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and top officials in his government. On Thursday, Geithner meets with French finance officials. But the discussions that will be most closely watched will occur in the Middle East.

In the United Arab Emirates, Geithner will meet with officials of government-run investment funds, known as sovereign wealth funds, which have poured billions of dollars into U.S. banks and other companies.

The Saudis also recycle significant petro-dollars into U.S. investments.

The Obama administration, just



Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner testifies during a joint hearing of the House Financial Services and the Agriculture Committees on Capitol Hill in Washington, Friday, July 10, 2009. In his opening remarks Geithner laid out a case for greater government control of the financial derivatives market, which helped cripple the economy. 'Establishing a comprehensive framework of oversight is crucial,' Geithner said.

(AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

reporters on the trip said that Geithner will also touch on:

- U.S. efforts to combat terrorist financing
- The possibility of increasing sanctions on Iran if it does not forgo its nuclear program
- Measures being considered in the United States and other countries to try to avoid a repeat of the current financial system crisis, the worst to hit America in seven decades.

Treasury officials said that Geithner would give his British and French counterparts an update on the administration's efforts to overhaul financial regulations and jump-start the economy with a \$787 billion stimulus plan.

In March, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said that China was concerned about the "safety" of the large amounts of money it had lent to the United States, while Zhou Xiaochuan, the head of China's central bank, suggested that monetary officials should explore the possibility of an alternative to using the dollar as the world's leading reserve currency.

Since Geithner's trip to China, officials there have continued to make comments about the need to move away from the dollar as the world's major reserve currency. □

## Investors look to companies for clues on economy

By TIM PARADIS,  
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Investors are about to get some of the economic data they've been craving — from the country's big corporations. Hundreds of earnings reports from the April-June quarter will begin flowing in this week, helping investors answer questions about how soon the economy will start growing. With the economy not gaining momentum after some early signs of recovery, investors are worried that they bet too soon on a rebound during the market's spring rally.

The early part of the rally came as data showed the pace of the economy's slide was slowing. But the euphoria has given way to a realization that just because the economy isn't collapsing, it isn't necessarily going to shift into growth anytime soon.

No one expects any obvious signals, such as a sudden pop in corporate profits. Instead, investors will pore over companies' forecasts. "Investors are hungry for a sense that things have turned, or are about to turn, and want to see some validation of that," said Michael Cuggino, president and portfolio manager at Pacific Heights Asset Management in San Francisco. "What's going to be most important is what companies are saying about their own businesses and industries, in terms

of activity, outlooks," he said.

Without some upbeat predictions, stocks could extend a monthlong retreat. The Dow Jones industrial average on Friday closed at 8,147, its lowest level since April 28. The blue chips have fallen 7.4 percent in four weeks, the longest slide since stocks bounced off 12-year lows on March 9 to rally 40 percent.

Brian Singer, chief investment officer at Singer Partners in Winnetka, Ill., doesn't expect the reports this week to offer many answers because the economy is likely to recover so slowly it will be difficult for companies to show much conviction even if they do forecast better days.

He expects the uncertainty will hold the stock market to a slow comeback. The Dow is still down 42.5 percent from its peak of nearly 14,165 in October 2007.

"It's going to be a market that kind of muddles its way up," Singer said.

Stocks could still stall even if earnings turn out to be better than expected, as they were in the first quarter. That's because most earnings will still be down sharply from a year ago.

Analysts polled by Thomson Reuters expect that average profits for the companies that make up the Standard & Poor's 500 index will fall 35.5 percent from the second quarter last year. □

like the Bush administration, has to walk a fine line between insisting that the United States remains open to foreign investment while guarding against the type of public furor that ended up blocking the efforts of Dubai-owned DP World to manage six of the largest ports in the United States in 2006.

Another key topic for Geithner will be oil-price stability — or lack thereof — and its impact on the global economy. After falling close to \$30 per barrel, crude oil prices had been rising steadily, peaking two weeks ago above \$73 per barrel, before retreating a bit last week.

Economists are concerned that the U.S. economy, struggling to emerge from the most prolonged recession in the post-World War II period, could suffer a serious setback if oil prices surge again.

The Saudis, who account for close to a third of OPEC's total production, have said they can live with oil at \$50 a barrel. But they support the general view of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries that prices of \$75 to \$80 are needed over the longer term.

Treasury officials who briefed

# Investors: 2Q revenue a sign of economic health

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Investors want to see some new math in companies' quarterly reports. No longer content with an economy that's limping toward recovery, the stock market is looking for signs that business improved in the second quarter or at least will in the coming months. And investors will measure that by the revenue figures companies put up as they issue earnings reports during the next four weeks.

Stocks punched higher in March when a handful of companies said profits for the first three months of the year wouldn't be as dismal as feared. But many businesses achieved better-than-expected results by slashing costs, including payrolls.

Now Wall Street wants to see signs that companies are selling more goods and services — for the health of the corporations themselves and for the overall economy. But investors are already on the pessimistic side about earnings, and that has already pulled the Standard & Poor's 500 index down 7 percent from its peak in mid-June.

Analysts polled by Thomson Financial expect earnings for the S&P 500 companies fell an average 35.5 percent in the April-June from a year earlier after falling the same amount in the first quarter.

Stocks could retreat further if companies don't provide some morsels of hope about the economy, said Jennifer Ellison, a principal at Bingham, Osborn & Scarborough in San Francisco.

"If we get some earnings surprises on the downside it could deflate the balloon," she said.

The early read from Alcoa Inc. provided evidence that companies might still be relying on cost-cutting. The company on Wednesday turned in a narrower-than-expected loss for the quarter, crediting efforts to slash expenses and raise cash.

Here are five companies that will report earnings this week. Each provides a snapshot of the economy.

Yum Brands Inc.

• Why it's important: With

chains including KFC, Pizza Hut, Taco Bell, Long John Silver's and A&W All-American Food, Yum's 36,000 restaurants span 110 countries and territories. Fast-food chains tend to weather economic downturns better than sit-down restaurants because their food is cheaper.

• When it will report: Tuesday, July 14.

• What the experts say: On average, analysts polled by Thomson Reuters expect Yum to post a profit of 43 cents per share on revenue of \$2.5 billion. In the same quarter of last year, the company reported a profit of 45 cents per share on revenue of nearly \$2.7 billion.

• You'll know the economy is improving if: Yum's performance improves in its sluggish U.S. operations, especially at brands such as Pizza Hut that generally have higher customer checks.

Better results at Pizza Hut and KFC — which has a sizable sit-down business — would signal that more people are opting to eat out rather than cook at home.

• You'll know the economy is not improving if: Yum's U.S. operations falter, especially at its higher-priced chains. Weak sales in Yum's important China operations would be a sign of sluggishness in the global economy.

• The quote: "I'm expecting a pretty high-quality quarter. Things are going OK in the U.S., and I think things are going a little bit better than planned in China," said Larry Miller, restaurant analyst with RBC Capital Markets.

IBM Corp.

• Why it's important: As one of the world's largest corporate technology suppliers, IBM's results say a lot about how much businesses are willing to spend on everything from computer servers to software and consulting services. But it can be tricky to read those results for clues about the broader economy. For one thing, IBM right now is booking revenue on contracts that may have been signed months or even years ago. Second, in a down economy, companies often turn to IBM's outsourcing services

as a way to save money, so IBM's sales can go up even while everything else is going down.

The best way to interpret IBM's results for signs of the health of the overall economy is in the company's overall forecast.

When it will report: Thursday, July 16.

What the experts say: On average, analysts polled by Thomson Reuters expect IBM to earn \$2.02 per share on \$23.58 billion in revenue. In the same quarter of last year, the company reported a profit of \$1.98 per share on revenue of \$26.8 billion.

You'll know the economy is improving if: IBM's sales show some improvement that can't be attributed mainly to weakness in the dollar. Another encouraging sign



FILE - In this Feb. 2, 2009 file photo, signs for Yum Brands restaurants Taco Bell and Pizza Hut Express are shown in San Carlos, Calif. Investors have placed big bets on an economic recovery since the spring but they know that companies can't diet their way to prosperity. They're looking for signs that revenue improved in the April-June, 2009, quarter or at least will in the coming months.

(AP Photo/Paul Sakuma, file)

would be if the company raises its already-bullish forecast for \$9.20 per share in profit in 2009.

You'll know the economy is not improving if: IBM backs off the forecast at all. □

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Michael Jackson was killed by a band of greedy hangers-on, his sister La Toya (pictured on June 28) alleged in interviews with British Sunday newspapers. The King of Pop's sister spoke about her younger brother's death and the aftermath with *The Mail on Sunday* and *The News of the World* weeklies. "I believe Michael was murdered, I felt that from the start," the 53-year-old said.

(AFP/File/Mark Ralston)

## Report: LaToya Jackson says Michael was murdered

LONDON – Two British Sunday newspapers said LaToya Jackson believes her brother Michael Jackson was murdered by a group of conspirators trying to get hold of his fortune. LaToya Jackson said she knows who is responsible for her brother's death and is determined to see them brought to justice, the *News of the World* reported.

According to the published interviews with *The News of the World* and *The Mail on Sunday*, she did not name any of the people she believes were involved and did not offer any evidence to support her claim that foul play was involved in the singer's sudden death on June 25.

"I feel it was all about money," she was quoted as saying by the *News of the World*. "Michael was worth well over a billion in music publishing assets and somebody killed him for that. He was worth more dead than alive."

She reportedly said the conspirators used powerful prescription drugs to keep Michael Jackson submissive and under control and also kept him away from his family.

She also claimed, the newspapers reported, that roughly \$2 million (1.23 million pounds) worth of cash and jewelry was taken from Michael Jackson's rented mansion and has not been accounted for.

LaToya Jackson also was quoted as saying her brother did not want to perform the 50 London shows he had agreed to, but was pressured into that agreement.

The shows, to mark Michael Jackson's return to concert performing, had been scheduled to begin Monday at London's O2 Arena.

Officials are waiting for the return of toxicology reports before determining the cause of Michael Jackson's death. □



**1 week delay in Jackson guardianship case**

By ANTHONY McCARTNEY,  
AP Entertainment Writer

FILE - In this July 7, 2009 file photo, Paris Jackson, left, Prince Michael Jackson and Prince Michael Jackson II appear on stage during the memorial service for Michael Jackson at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

(AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill,  
Pool)

## "Bruno" fashions top spot at U.S. box office

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) – "Bruno," British satirist Sacha Baron Cohen's latest subversive outing, narrowly claimed the No. 1 spot at the weekend box office in North America, according to studio estimates issued on Sunday. The "mockumentary," in which Baron Cohen plays a gay Austrian fashion model seeking fame in the United States sold \$30.4 million worth of tickets during the three days beginning July 10, distributor Universal Pictures said.

"Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs" held steady at No. 2 with \$28.5 million, taking the 12-day haul for 20th Century Fox's prehistoric cartoon to \$120.6 million.

Last weekend's champion, "Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen," slipped to No. 3 with \$24.2 million; after 19 days, Paramount Pictures' robot sequel has earned \$339.2 million, easily the biggest movie of the year.

The one other new entry was Fox's teen romantic comedy "I Love You, Beth Cooper," starring Hayden Panettiere in the title role. It came in at No. 7 with \$5 million, in line with the studio's modest expectations.

The opening for "Bruno" was also in line with the forecasts of the General Electric Co unit, which paid independent producer Media Rights Capital \$42.5 million for distribution rights in North America and eight foreign territories. Media Rights declined to disclose the budget.

Baron Cohen's previous release, the similarly outrageous "Borat," opened to \$26.5 million in November 2006. But that was from about 800 theaters, while "Bruno" played in 2,756 theaters. "Borat" ended up with \$128.5 million in North America and an additional \$133 million internationally.

Universal said "Bruno" earned \$20 million from the eight international markets, led by



Sacha Baron Cohen as "Bruno" caught upside down on a wire during his entrance at the 2009 MTV Movie Awards in Los Angeles, May 31, 2009.

REUTERS/Mario Anzuoni

No. 1 bows in Britain and Ireland (\$8.1 million) and Australia (\$6.1 million).

"Bruno," faced a similar storm of controversy as "Borat." In the new film, Baron Cohen's character sashays across the American landscape, piling on the homosexual activity for unsuspecting co-stars and a squeamish audience. Critics mostly liked the movie, while gay-rights groups were mixed in their reactions. Both films were directed by Larry Charles, a former writer/producer on "Seinfeld."

Exit data provided by Universal indicated that men made up

56 percent of the audience in North America, in line with the turnout for "Borat." But this time, 54 percent of moviegoers were aged 25 and older, while 53 percent of the "Borat" crowd was aged under 25. Both films were rated "R" in the United States, requiring moviegoers under 17 to be accompanied by an adult. Universal distribution president Nikki Rocco said the film would be "very profitable" for the studio, which picked up the rights before "Borat" was released.

Fox is a unit of News Corp. Paramount is a unit of Viacom Inc. □

## Black culture lights up Broadway's Great White Way

By Christine Kearney

NEW YORK (Reuters) – When U.S. President Barack Obama took his wife, Michelle, to a Broadway play by African American playwright August Wilson about a black father's search for freedom, ticket sales for the production spiked.

As the presidential visit cast a spotlight on Wilson's revival, playwrights and theater observers say both Obama's election and more open theaters and audiences have helped bring more stories of black culture to the New York stage this year.

Both on Broadway and off-Broadway, plays and musicals about black culture or issues of race are being praised and more productions are in the works. □

LOS ANGELES – Michael Jackson's mother and ex-wife will have time to reach an agreement over who will take care of the singer's three children. For the second time, Katherine Jackson and Deborah Rowe joined to seek a delay in a hearing that could decide who gets custody of the pop superstar's children. A guardianship hearing scheduled for Monday has been delayed

for a week, an attorney said Friday. Katherine Jackson will remain the temporary guardian of her son's three children, who range in ages from 7 to 12. Court records show a judge granted the delay Friday afternoon. The hearing could have presented a showdown between Katherine Jackson and Rowe, who was married to the pop singer from 1996 to 1999. Instead, the two sides are

trying to broker an out-of-court settlement. "We are pleased that the child custody hearing has been continued over until July 20th to further our progress and allow us to privately and amicably resolve this most important matter in a dignified manner for the benefit of the children first and all involved," L. Londell McMillan said in a statement to The Associated Press. □

# The French Steakhouse delivers dining under the stars



Eagle Beach – The French Steakhouse at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa just added another charming dining option, a tropical outdoor courtyard, featuring delicious cuisine under the stars.

The famed French Steakhouse prides itself on the elegant dining experience it offers

patrons in the fully air-conditioned dining room. Yet recently the idea of adding a garden spot to the existing blueprint began to sprout in the creative mind of Executive Chef George Hoek, and he immediately recruited the landscapers to create the intimate, lovely setting.

## Giorgio's Ristorante Italiano introduces Menu Turistico



Eagle Beach -- Giorgio's Ristorante Italiano located at the heart of the low-rise hotels at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa, delivers authentic Mediterranean flavors, at a reasonable price. The restaurant has just introduced Menu Turistico a three-course dinner featuring appetizers, main courses and desserts for just \$19.95, per person, plus 15% service charge.

Patrons may choose between home made soup and Caesar salad, Fettuccini Alfredo, Lasagna Casarecia, Spaghetti alla Bolognese or any favorite pizza with Tiramisu, Cheese Cake or Ice Cream for the sweet finale.

Posing with Angelo the Italian maitre D' at Giorgio's, Mr and Mrs. Klaus, from Pennsylvania, 2nd time repeaters in Aruba at the Manchebo, the trip was a birthday present from him to her and since they are celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in November, they are already thinking about coming back, they enjoyed Menu Turistico and recommend it wholeheartedly! □

The French Steakhouse Ooh-La-La menu is now served indoor and alfresco, featuring creative appetizers, soups, salads, seafood dishes, poultry and the Pièce de Résistance South American & USDA Beef specialties.

Among popular appetizers the chef's Tropical Crab Cakes with pineapple & mango salsa and the Teriyaki Glazed Seared Duck Breast, served with garden greens and balsamic dressing are real crowd pleasers.

True to the restaurant's French roots, the Onion Soup is a classic, while the Honey Glazed Salmon Salad winks at the exotic East with a sweet soy dressing.

The menu features a great variety of seafood dishes from fresh fish to the totally sinful and amazingly decadent Caribbean Stuffed Shrimp with Crabmeat and Bacon, which became an instant hit. The tequila and sweet chili glaze, lends the Jumbo shrimp



a pure taste of heaven!

The French Steakhouse is naturally famous for the South American Churrasco steak, a signature preparation, which now shares the stage with juicy USDA beef specialties such as NY Sirloin and Filet Mignon.

Light-eaters will find the Jerk Chicken Skewers and the Lemon Herb Broilers very satisfying.

Open seven days a week from 5:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. the French Steakhouse is blessed with the nicest staff and a

delightfully renovated dining room with sparkling China, crisp linen, an interesting bread basket, colossal desserts and live jazz on piano with Eddy Samson who is Aruba's best entertainer, and a walking & breathing music encyclopedia, just whistle the tune, and Eddy will produce a symphonic version of you favorite song. Hungry patrons will appreciate the Ambassador's 5-course menu featuring the run of the menu highlights for just \$34.95 per person. [www.manchebo.com/steakhouse](http://www.manchebo.com/steakhouse) □

## Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar reinvents Beach Cuisine



Eagle Beach – Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa deserves recognition as the home of Beach Cuisine.

Executive Chef George Hoek and his culinary team serve a Sun Splashed menu on the ocean front terrace,

raising the bar to a must-visit, must-try status.

The contemporary menu, lists many favorite dishes from around the world, borrowing inspiration from US, Mexican, Thai, Jamaican, Cuban, Greek and Mediterranean kitchens, all served with a tropical, Caribbean flair.

From Sun-Sational Salads, to Cuban pressed jawbreakers and wraps, mid-day platters also include oversize Beef Burgers, Philly Cheese Steak Sandwiches and Hot Dogs.

The Pega Pega tropical &

frozen cocktail list, with fresh fruit or ice cream smoothies, daiquiris, coladas and margaritas, leaves nothing out, including Yellow Birds, Sex on the Beach and Mudslides, making a lunch-time brain-freeze, extremely easy to get!

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with granite counter tops and a full stainless steel appliance package including washer and dryer. This 35-condominium complex will feature a beautiful swimming pool with a beach style entry with waterfalls and fountain and state of the art fiber optic lighting. The entrance of the building has a drive-up covered entrance and an elegant two-story lobby leading to the sun-filled hallways and corridors.

The common area will facilitate the owners with a well-equipped gym overlooking the gardens and the pool.

The garden will feel like an oasis true to the projects name. There will also be a recreation room and sofas throughout the common area to lounge and relax. Further amenities include a 24/7 security, a full concierge and a rental program for the owners who want to earn a return on their investment. The concierge service will be helpful to assist the owners in making their 'homecoming' a very pleasant return. Each condo will have one designated parking space exclusive to the owners.

Construction on Oasis at Eagle

Beach is moving fast. Fifteen of the thirty five units have already been sold. The condominiums will be ready for occupancy by March 2010. Oasis is located on Eagle Beach which allows for an easy access, even on foot, to the best casinos, restaurants, golf courses, shopping areas and night life the Aruba has to offer.

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## A new service introduced Segafredo Café now offers lunch delivery

SOUTH BEACH CENTRE – Segafredo Café at the South Beach Centre just announced that it is offering free lunch delivery of sandwiches and drinks midday.

Just submit your order prior to 11 a.m., fax it or call in, and your baguette, croissant or ciabatta sandwiches will arrive at your doorstep escorted by a choice of salads, tosti, muffins, coffees to go and drinks to go.

Segafredo Café at the South Beach Centre offers more than just delicious coffee. It serves dinner, drinks, frozen cocktails, beer, munchies, snacks, lunch and naturally, coffee anytime, and not just any old brew.

From the cultivation of the coffee plants and the selection of the berries in the Segafredo Zanetti plantations in Brazil and Costa Rica, to the art blending and roasting in the company's contemporary headquarters, the process guarantees high-quality results, producing the most famous and appreciated Italian coffee worldwide.

And the central location and Libations.

friendly décor of the Segafredo Café in the South Beach Centre, makes it perfect as a place for friends!

The menu says manager Sartini Kousmaker offers Coffee, Hot and Iced Coffee Drinks, Coffee Specialties, Tea, Fruit Smoothies, and Beers, Premium Martinis, Tropical Cocktails & Frozen

Patrons may order breakfast all day, from Croissant Sandwiches to Fresh Fruit Salads, Omelets, Brioches and Muffins to Classic Toasts, and Paninis.

For Lunch & Dinner Segafredo serves Italian Salads: Cesar, Champagne Cocktails, Fine Caprese, Antipasto, Prosciutto Wines by the Glass, Imported Parma Mozzarella & Tomato, Beers, Premium Martinis, anytime of the day along with a great selection of hand-tossed

Pizza, and by-now-famous perfect selection of house Lasagna.

After-dinner Tiramisu, Apple Pie, Chocolate Cake and Italian Ice-Cream, may be enjoyed late into the night. The Segafredo coffee bar lounge also has a wide range of quality refreshments from the classic Italian espresso to desserts, gelato, and paninis, salads, appetizers, beer and wine. For more information: sartini.kousemaker@gmail.com



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President Barack Obama greets the crowd at a departure ceremony at the airport in Accra, Ghana, Saturday, July 11, 2009.

(AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

## After 2 tough summits, Obama savors Ghana moment

By MARK S. SMITH,  
Associated Press Writer

CAPE COAST, Ghana — For a new president, there inevitably comes that moment: the first time he hears a foreign crowd hoarsely chanting his name, or sees thousands of well-wishers surging forward, or realizes youngsters are running pell-mell beside his motorcade, desperate for a glimpse of his face.

For Barack Obama, the moment came here — in the teeming streets near a West African castle where traders once shipped human chattel to a life of toil in the New World.

After a week of difficult summits in Russia and Italy, trying to get balky allies to follow his lead, the outpouring Obama was treated to in Ghana can only be called rapturous — from Africans overjoyed at the visit of America's first black president to a country south of the Sahara.

And after feeling this kind of love, it must be cruelly hard to go home.

Awaiting Obama in Washington: an ever-more-painful recession and two of the biggest fights of his young presidency — over health care and energy.

As he toured Europe and Africa, conservative "Blue Dog" Democrats sought major changes to the health care overhaul House leaders are working on — and in so doing, forced a delay. At a news conference in Italy, Obama sought to downplay that, repeating his call for action by the August recess, but it was clear his top agenda item had hit a speed bump.

Meantime, though Obama bragged to the allies

about House passage of a cap-and-trade bill, the coalition on global warming was fragile, and the measure's fate in the Senate remains uncertain.

But the start of Obama's latest foreign trip was a hard diplomatic slog, too.

In Moscow, Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev agreed to negotiate a new nuclear arms accord to replace START I, which expires in December. However, he left Moscow with disputes over missile defense, Russia's neighbor Georgia and Moscow's treatment of dissidents unresolved.

In L'Aquila, Italy, the G-8 Summit ended on a similarly inconclusive note, as developing nations balked at G-8 calls to halve greenhouse gas emissions by mid-century.

Which must have made the Ghanaian effusion all the sweeter.

It began in the capital, Accra, where parliament treated him to a cheering welcome, heralded by a merry trombone-blast fanfare. "I have the blood of Africa within me," Obama declared, before predicting a new African dawn if the continent can throw off its history of coups and corruption.

But the White House had purposely not scheduled any large, outdoor events in the capital, so the reception there was subdued. Aides said Obama wanted the focus on his message, not him. They also wanted no repeat of President Bill Clinton's open-air speech in 1998 — after which he was nearly trampled by a jubilant throng.

*Continued on Page B8*

## GOP unifies against any more stimulus spending



US President Barack Obama, seen here making remarks on the economy in the Rose Garden, said the latest surge in job losses was "sobering," after new government figures pushed the unemployment rate to a new 26-year high of 9.5 percent.

(AFP/Saul Loeb)

By PHILIP ELLIOTT,

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Republicans lined up Sunday in opposition to a second economic stimulus package, a rare demonstration of unity from an out-of-power political party in search of a rallying cry against President Barack Obama.

Republicans called Obama's \$787 billion spending plan a "flop" and said it hasn't fulfilled its hype.

*Continued on page B4*



Soldiers from The Princess of Wales's Regiment march through Worthing, England, to mark their return from Afghanistan and Iraq, Saturday July 11, 2009. Foreign Secretary David Miliband defended Britain's role in Afghanistan on Saturday after fighting claimed eight soldiers' lives in 24 hours.

(AP Photo/Steve Parsons, PA)

## 2 US Marines killed in Afghan bomb blasts

By JASON STRAZIUSO,

Associated Press

KABUL — A bomb blast killed two U.S. Marines in Afghanistan's dangerous south, where thousands of American troops have deployed in a massive operation to oust Taliban fighters from the country's opium poppy region, officials said Sunday.

*Continued on Page B6*



Peru's President Alan Garcia, left, shakes hands with his new Cabinet Chief Javier Velasquez during a swearing-in ceremony at the government palace in Lima, Saturday, July 11, 2009.

(AP Photo/Karel Navarro)

## Peru's leader shakes up his Cabinet amid protests

By FRANKLIN BRICENO,  
Associated Press

LIMA, Peru — President Alan Garcia shuffled his Cabinet on Saturday following months of protests, replacing seven of 16 ministers and naming a new chief — the third person to hold the post in nine months.

Javier Velasquez, a lawyer who has served as a congressman for 14 years for Garcia's APRA party, was sworn in as Cabinet secretary to replace Yehude Simon, who resigned Wednesday.

Simon had drawn strong criticism for the government's handling of months of protests by Indians over moves to open the Amazon to oil and other development. A police crackdown on a protest roadblock triggered violence that killed at least 33 people on June 5. Simon's predecessor, Jorge del Castillo, quit in October, along with all other Cabinet members, after tapes surfaced that allegedly revealed members of his party discussing bribes to steer business to the Norwegian oil company Discover Petroleum. □

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# Honduras lifts curfew 2 weeks after coup d'etat



Xiomara Castro, right, wife of ousted Honduras' President Manuel Zelaya, comforts Rebeca Murillo, sister of Isys Obed Murillo, during a demonstration of supporters of ousted Honduras' President Manuel Zelaya honoring Obed Murillo in Tegucigalpa, Saturday, July 11, 2009. Murillo, 19, was killed Sunday during clashes with police officers and soldiers in Tegucigalpa during a demonstration in support of Zelaya.

(AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd)

By JUAN ZAMORANO,

Associated Press Writer

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras — Honduran authorities on Sunday lifted a curfew imposed since the ousting of President Manuel Zelaya two weeks ago — a sign the interim government is trying to restore normality to life in the crisis-gripped country.

In a nationally broadcast announcement, the interim government said the curfew had reached its objective to "restore calm" and curb crime.

The administration of Roberto Micheletti imposed the curfew after soldiers escorted Zelaya

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Photo by Diane Keijzer

out of the country at gunpoint on June 28, plunging Honduras into political turmoil.

Hondurans were ordered to stay in their homes from 11 p.m. to 4:30 a.m. nightly. The government briefly extended it from sunset to sunrise when Zelaya attempted to return to Honduras and the military blocked his plane from landing by parking vehicles on the runway July 5.

Daily demonstrations for and against the forcibly exiled leader have disrupted transit and prompted many businesses to close. Many governments have withdrawn their ambassadors to protest the coup.

The interim government said Hondurans nationwide can go out at night starting Sunday.

Juan Barahona, leader of the Zelaya support base, said officials were under pressure from bars and other businesses hurt by the curfew.

"This is to give the world the impression that there is an environment of freedom in the country," he said.

Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez, who has been the most vociferous defender of Zelaya, said Sunday that Micheletti was behind the brief detention of journalists for his country's leading state television channel.

Venezuela's ABN state news agency reported that the seven were detained Saturday and later released after Venezuelan Foreign Minister Nicolas Maduro made efforts to secure their freedom.

Meanwhile, Pope Benedict XVI called on Hondurans to pursue dialogue and reconciliation after following the situation with "great concern."

Both claimants to Honduras' presidency met separately Thursday with Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, who is leading mediation efforts, but they refused to talk face to face.

Representatives of Zelaya and Micheletti met again with Arias on Friday and agreed to hold future talks, but no date was set. About 300 Zelaya supporters held a peaceful demonstration in a park in Tegucigalpa on Sunday. □

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Calif. leaders:

## We're making progress on \$26B gap

By JUDY LIN,  
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders reported steady progress on California's \$26.3 billion budget mess and raised the prospect of a resolution in the coming week.

Negotiators were scheduled to resume closed-door meetings Sunday at the Capitol following two days of talks. They were expected to continue discussing the governor's social service reform proposals, but still need to sort out public education funding, which is the largest component of general fund spending.

"I would say we're getting very close to a general framework, but there are still outlying questions," state Assembly Minority Leader Sam Blakeslee, a San Luis Obispo Republican, said after

emerging from a closed-door meeting between lawmakers and Schwarzenegger on Saturday.

The possibility of a breakthrough in resolving California's mammoth budget shortfall comes a week after the state began issuing IOUs to thousands of vendors as a cash-saving move.

State workers also have begun taking three days off a month without pay, cutting the salaries of more than 200,000 government employees by 14 percent.

Bank of America Corp. and other major banks said Friday was the last day they would honor the IOUs, which cannot be redeemed until Oct. 2. That left some state contractors who are being issued IOUs scrambling to find banks that will cash the warrants.

California leaders approved a two-year budget package in February that increased

sales, personal income and vehicle license taxes, but it was not enough to bring the state's spending plan back into balance.

Personal income taxes declined 34 percent during the first five months of the year, a slide that has accelerated as the recession continues to strangle California's economy. On Friday, the state controller's office reported California had spent \$10.4 billion more than it collected in the fiscal year that ended June 30.

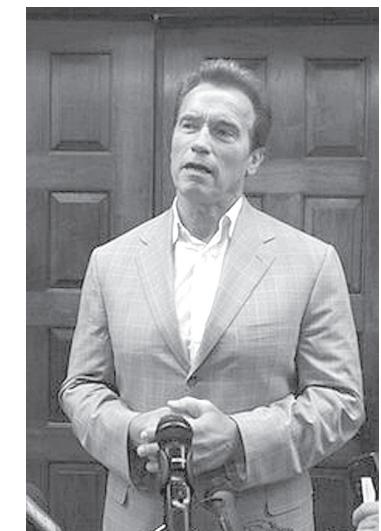
The current budget shortfall amounts to more than a quarter of California's general fund, its main account for paying operating expenses.

Without sufficient cash to cover all of its payment obligations, the state will have to defer payments to its pension funds and may issue IOUs instead of paychecks to state employees if a compromise isn't reached by late August.

"Certainly none of us wanted to see us get to the point of having IOUs. And now we're to a point where a number of banks are saying, 'We're not going to accept them,'" said state Assembly Speaker Karen Bass. "What more motivation is there?"

The latest talks center on the extent of budget cuts — expected to range from \$14 billion to \$15 billion — and what other steps might be taken to close the deficit.

In addition to cuts, Schwarzenegger and Republican lawmakers also want reforms to welfare, pension, health care and in-home supportive service programs. They say preventing waste and abuse will save the state money, which in turn can be used to prevent cuts elsewhere in the budget. The governor's office has



Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger talks with reporters during a break in budget meeting with Legislative leaders at the Capitol in Sacramento, Calif., Friday, July 10, 2009.

(AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli)

estimated its reform proposals will save \$1.7 billion this fiscal year alone. Democrats have criticized the reform proposals as peripheral issues that do not have a direct effect on the immediate budget deficit. They also say Schwarzenegger has overstated the savings. □

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# Sotomayor faces friendly jury as hearings begin



Supreme Court nominee Sonia Sotomayor smiles during her meeting with new Minnesota Senator Al Franken in his office on Capitol Hill in Washington July 9, 2009.

REUTERS/Kevin Lamarque

By MARK SHERMAN,  
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Sonia Sotomayor has decided advantages as she begins the most important trial of her long legal career, a nationally televised consideration of her nomination to be the first Hispanic and just the third woman on the Supreme Court.

She will tell her compelling up-from-poverty personal story to a jury tilted strongly in her favor — Democrats hold a comfortable majority on the Senate Judiciary Committee and a filibuster-resistant 60 votes in the Senate.

Still, Republicans signaled that they will press the 55-year-old New Yorker and veteran federal judge to explain past rulings involving discrimination complaints and gun rights, as well as comments that they say raise doubts about Sotomayor's ability to judge cases fairly.

The sharpest comments about her so far came Sunday from Sen. Jeff Sessions of Alabama, the senior Republican on the committee. Sotomayor has said repeatedly in speeches over the past 10

years that personal experiences influence a judge's decisions, Sessions said.

"She has criticized the idea that a woman and a man would reach the same result. She expects them to reach different results. I think that's philosophically incompatible with the American system," Sessions said on CBS' "Face the Nation."

Her defenders have tried to paint a picture of Sotomayor as a meticulous judge, one who "goes out of her way, as a good jurist should, to follow the law, no matter what her sympathies tell her," Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., told The Associated Press last week.

Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, the committee chairman, said Sunday on CBS that Sotomayor's 17-year record on the federal bench shows her to be a "mainstream judge."

The questioning of Sotomayor won't even begin until Tuesday, after the 12 Democrats and seven Republicans on the committee use up to 10 minutes each for preliminary remarks and the nominee makes her opening statement.

President Barack Obama

chose Sotomayor in late May to take the place of Justice David Souter, who retired last month. The switch would not appreciably alter the balance of the power on the conservative-leaning court.

Obama called Sotomayor on Sunday to wish her luck at the hearings, compliment her for making courtesy calls to 89 senators and express his confidence that she would win Senate approval, the White House said.

In choosing Sotomayor, Obama also has put pressure on Republicans who might be forced to temper their opposition because of their need to increase their appeal to Hispanic voters, the fastest-growing segment of the electorate. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, highlighted the potential political pitfalls for Republicans when he noted on "Fox News Sunday" that a third of his constituents are Hispanic and that they want Sotomayor judged fairly.

The most fertile ground for Republican questioning appears to be on race and ethnicity, focused on Sotomayor's "wise Latina" comment and the white firefighters from New Haven, Conn., who won their Supreme

Court case last month.

In a speech in 2001, Sotomayor said she hoped a "wise Latina" often would reach better conclusions than a white male without the same life experience.

By a 5-4 vote last month, the justices agreed with the firefighters, who claimed they were denied promotion on account of their race after New Haven officials threw out test results because too few minorities did well. The court reversed a decision by Sotomayor and two other federal appeals court judges.

Republicans might use the wise Latina comment and the New Haven case "to imply that Sotomayor is a prisoner of identity politics," said David Garrow, a Cambridge University historian who follows the court.

"A lot of it is going to really depend not on particular answers but on how she comes across as a personality," Garrow said.

On that score, Schumer predicted that when the public gets its first long look at Sotomayor, "they're going to be wowed."

The subtext of the hearings has less to do with Sotomayor than with eventual other high

court vacancies Obama might get to fill.

"A lot of it is about the future of the Supreme Court and future nominees," said Doug Kendall, president of the liberal Constitutional Accountability Center. The GOP wants to "try to effectively state their vision for the Supreme Court and their concern with where President Obama's nominees could take the court," Kendall said.

Brian Fitzpatrick, a Vanderbilt University law professor who worked for Cornyn during the two most recent Supreme Court confirmation hearings, said, "Even if you can't defeat the nomination, perhaps you will get public opinion a little more behind the Republican party." Gun rights activists and abortion opponents critical of Sotomayor also want senators to question her aggressively. They are joined by abortion-rights groups, also wary about Sotomayor's largely unknown views on abortion. "Failure to pursue such questions creates dangerous uncertainty regarding a constitutional right that has already been significantly weakened," said the Center for Reproductive Rights. □

## STIMULUS

*Continued from Page B1*

They criticized the White House for increasing the federal deficit and doing little to combat an unemployment rate that hit 9.5 percent in June.

"The reality is it hasn't helped yet," said Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz. "Only about 6.8 percent of the money has actually been spent. What I proposed is, after you complete the contracts that are already committed, the things that are in the pipeline, stop it."

Obama urged patience with his spending program, which administration officials acknowledge was designed with incorrect or incomplete economic data.

"The stimulus package is working exactly as we had anticipated," Obama told CNN in an interview from Ghana that aired on Sunday.

"We always anticipated that a big chunk of that money then would be spent not only in the second half of the year, but also next year. This was designed to be a two-year plan and not a six-month plan," he said.

Republicans, though, were not willing to sit by idly.

"I do think it is fair to say that the stimulus is a flop," said Rep. Eric Cantor, R-Va. "The

goal that was set when we passed it was unemployment wouldn't rise past 8.5 percent, and what we see now is businesses just aren't hiring. Even the best projections have us losing 750,000 more jobs this year."

Congress passed Obama's economic stimulus plan over the objection of out-of-power Republican lawmakers. Since then, GOP aides on Capitol Hill and officials alike have seized on the spending's shortcomings and unfilled promises.

"A lot of it has been spent on ridiculous projects," said Sen. John McCain, the Arizona Republican who was his party's presidential nominee last year.

Obama's allies defended the spending they helped usher into law.

"It's a two-year plan and we're four months into it," said Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill.

Some, including billionaire Warren Buffet, have called for a second round of spending to steady the economy.

Obama and his allies have said it's too early to make that decision; his critics, though, pledged to redouble their opposition to any second spending bill.

"I think that would be the biggest mistake we could ever make," McCain said. □

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This 2005 picture shows Byrd and Melanie Billings at their home in Beulah, Fla. Investigators asked the public to be on the lookout Friday, July 10, 2009 for a red van they believe carried three men involved in the deaths of the Florida Panhandle couple who were shot in their rural home while eight of their children slept.

(AP Photo/The Pensacola News Journal, Karena Cawthon)

## Sheriff: Suspects in couple's slaying experienced

PENSACOLA, Fla. — A Florida couple killed in their home had an extensive surveillance system in the house that recorded three apparently experienced criminals swiftly slip into the house before driving off in a red van, police said.

Several tips from the public led investigators to a red, 15-passenger van Saturday morning that they believe was used as the getaway vehicle by the three men, believed to be in their "late teens or up," Escambia County Sheriff David Morgan said. Authorities were questioning two people linked to the van, but no arrests have been made.

Byrd and Melanie Billings of Beulah, a rural area west of Pensacola near the Alabama state line, were found shot dead in their home Thursday evening.

The couple, known for their large family of adopted children, had an extensive surveillance system in the house and Morgan said authorities have reviewed the tapes repeatedly. □

# Relatives go to Ill. cemetery looking for answers

By CHRISTINA M. WRIGHT,  
Associated Press Writer

ALSIK, Ill. — A constant stream of relatives hoping to find their loved ones showed up Saturday as officials exhumed one grave in a cemetery where four former employees are accused of digging up and dumping hundreds of bodies in a scheme to resell plots.

One body was found in the exhumed grave at the historic black cemetery, Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart said, despite an earlier report that two bodies were there. The former workers also have been accused of burying some bodies in shared graves.

Authorities closed Burr Oak Cemetery, home to the graves of civil rights-era lynching victim Emmett Till and blues singer Dinah Washington, on Friday and declared all of its 150 acres a crime scene after Dart found bones while walking on the site. On Saturday, families carrying photos and old crumpled funeral programs stood in snaking lines to talk to officials. Some cried, others were angry and many were stoic.

"It's a zoo, and it's going to be a zoo because every black person in Chicago has someone buried here," said Chicago resident Jennifer Gyimah, 51, who was waiting to check on family members' graves. "As a living human being, you give dignity to the dead. The dignity today has been shattered."

Officials said they would try to respond to families in the next week, but Dart said the investigation was hampered by a lack of maps for large sections of the cemetery. Many of those his staff had found were hand-drawn and sketchy, he said.

"You might as well be talking about hieroglyphics here," he said. "This is unheard of."

He said he believes that at least 300 of the cemetery's 100,000 graves have been dug up.

A portion of the cemetery devoted to children, called "Baby Land," was particularly poorly documented, Dart said.

Chicago resident Gail Cooper's 7-year-old daughter was buried there in 1984. She was trying to check on the grave Saturday.

"I had trusted her to these people," said Cooper, 48. "I don't want her here anymore. It's no longer sacred."

Dart said more than 10 mothers have asked for information about their buried children.

One man who had long suspected his mother was buried on top of another person had her grave dug up Saturday in an exhumation scheduled before the investigation started. Workers dug down 7 feet. At 33 inches, the minimum depth allowed under state law, they found a casket, Dart said. Relatives recognized mementos resting on top and said the coffin belonged to Rachel Boone, the man's mother, the sheriff



Stanley and Wanda Windermyre, of Zion, Ill., hold records of Wanda's mother, Ora Mae Sawyer, and grandfather, Carnell Neal, who are buried at the Burr Oak Cemetery in Alsip, Ill., Friday, July 10, 2009. Hundreds of confused and angry family members have come to the historic cemetery looking for answers after four people were accused of digging up graves and reselling plots in a moneymaking scheme.

(AP Photo/M. Spencer Green)

said. The casket was reburied without being opened, and relatives held a short memorial service. Earlier in the day, an attorney for the cemetery's owner told Cook County authorities they would find two bodies in the grave, a sheriff's spokeswoman said. It was not clear what the attorney based that statement on.

"That makes us ask, 'Where was that one that you thought was double stacked?'" Patterson said. "The record-keeping was so poor that we don't think they know. We don't know if we're ever going to know."

Three former gravediggers and a former cemetery manager have each been charged with one count of dismembering a

body. The four sold existing deeds and plots to unsuspecting customers, authorities said. They then allegedly dug up hundreds of corpses and either dumped them in a weeded, vacant area of the cemetery — which authorities labeled the original crime scene — or double-stacked them in graves.

The four made about \$300,000 in a scheme that stretched back at least four years, authorities said. While Till's grave site was not disturbed, investigators found his original glass-topped casket rusting in a shack at the cemetery, police said Friday. He was exhumed in 2005 during an investigation of his death and reburied in a new casket. □

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**U.S. soldiers of 2nd Platoon from the 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division pull out an armoured vehicle after it slid down a road during a patrol in the village of Qaleh-ye-Naw in the mountains of Wardak Province in Afghanistan July 11, 2009.**

REUTERS/Shamil Zhumatov (AFGHANISTAN POLITICS MILITARY)

#### **U.S. MARINES KILLED**

**Continued from Page B1**

Some 4,000 Marines moved into Helmand province this month, the largest Marine operation in Afghanistan since the 2001 U.S. invasion. They have met little head-on resistance but remain vulnerable to guerrilla tactics like suicide and roadside bombs.

"These terrorist attacks are hard to prevent, can be carried out by a few individuals, and do not require a military force capable of confronting the Marines," said Arturo Munoz, an expert on the tribal

environment in Helmand province with the Washington-based RAND Corp.

"I would expect the Taliban to avoid pitched battles with the Marines in order to avoid a large number of casualties," he said. "This does not mean they will avoid violence."

The two Marines were killed Saturday in Helmand. Military officials did not release any other details nor give a specific location. The military initially reported four Marines had died but later corrected the figure, saying the deaths were mistakenly double-counted.

The American casualties come

after eight British deaths in Helmand in a 24-hour period ending Friday, triggering debate in Britain about its role in Afghanistan. Britain has now lost more troops in Afghanistan than in Iraq.

In an interview broadcast Sunday, President Barack Obama called Britain's contribution critically important and said U.S. and British troops face a difficult summer ahead of elections in Afghanistan late next month. "We've got to get through elections," Obama told Sky News. "The most important thing we can do is to combine our military efforts with effective diplomacy and development, so that Afghans feel a greater stake and have a greater capacity to secure their country."

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown has said fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan will help keep extremist groups from launching attacks inside Britain. And he told Afghan President Hamid Karzai in a telephone call Sunday that Britain would stand "shoulder-to-shoulder with the people of Afghanistan for the long haul," according to a statement by the Afghan presidency.

But in an editorial Sunday, The

Observer newspaper predicted the British public will soon decide the war is not worth the casualties.

"Lives saved by bringing soldiers home will seem a surer benefit than the unproven hypothesis of preventing terrorism with a war thousands of miles away," the newspaper said.

Another American service member died Friday in the U.S. of wounds suffered in Afghanistan in June, said Lt. Cmdr. Christine Sidenstricker, who confirmed the deaths of the two Marines.

The three deaths bring to 104 the number of U.S. troops killed in Afghanistan this year, a record pace. Last year 151 U.S. troops died in the country. Overall, 193 international troops have died in Afghanistan this year, according to an Associated Press count based on official announcements.

Obama ordered 21,000 additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan earlier this year to help put down an increasingly violent Taliban insurgency. Some 10,000 Marines and 4,000 soldiers from the Stryker Brigade — the 5th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division based in Fort Lewis, Wash. — are

deploying in the south, the Taliban's spiritual birthplace and stronghold.

The troops will help provide security for the Aug. 20 election, when Afghans will choose a president and provincial councils, and help train army and police units that the U.S. hopes one day can provide security for the country. By fall, a record 68,000 U.S. troops will be in Afghanistan.

Violence flared elsewhere around the country over the weekend, illustrating again that security is deteriorating. At least 22 people were killed, including seven police officers, officials reported on Sunday.

- In southern Uruzgan province, international troops and Afghan police killed 12 militants in a gunbattle Saturday, police spokesman Mohammad Musa said.

- In Logar, four policemen died when a roadside bomb hit their car in Charkh district Saturday, said provincial police chief Gen. Mustafa Mosseini.

- In Helmand, two police were killed in a roadside bombing in the Helmand provincial capital of Lashkar Gah late Saturday, said Dawood Ahmadi, the governor's spokesman. □

## **5 Iranian officials released by US return to Iran**

By NASSER KARIMI and REBECCA SANTANA, Associated Press Writers

TEHRAN, Iran — Five Iranian officials held in Iraq for more than two years by U.S. forces returned home Sunday after the U.S. released them under pressure from the Iraqi government.

American officials said a U.S.-Iraqi security agreement required that they hand the men over, but said they fear the Iranians — held on suspicion of aiding Shiite militants — pose a threat to U.S. troops in Iraq.

The five men were handed over to Iraqi officials Thursday and flew Sunday to Tehran where they were met at the airport by a cheering crowd of onlookers who carried the men on their shoulders and put garlands of flowers around their necks.

Iran's Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki in a news conference with the men welcomed them back and praised what he described as

their courageous resistance while being held in Iraq by U.S. forces.

The Iranians were detained in the northern Iraqi city of Irbil in January 2007. At the time, U.S. authorities said the men included the operations chief and other members of Iran's elite Quds Force, which is accused of arming and training Iraqi militants.

Iran denied the claim, and has described the men as diplomats who were kidnapped by U.S. forces. Mottaki accused President Barack Obama of continuing the bullying practices of his predecessor.

"Iran preserves its right for legal action against the bullying act of the Bush administration in detaining Iranian diplomats, which was unfortunately continued in the new administration," Mottaki was quoted as saying by Iranian television.

The U.S. has long charged that Iran is behind much of the violence in Iraq and has been

financing and assisting Shiite militias in attacks against U.S. and Iraqi forces.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari said earlier that the transfer could help improve dialogue between the U.S. and Iran after a decades-long adversarial relationship.

Under the U.S.-Iraqi security pact that went into effect in January, the U.S. must hand over Iraqi and foreign detainees in its custody.

Iran and Iraq have enjoyed better relations after the U.S.-led invasion in 2003 toppled the government of Saddam Hussein, who launched an eight-year war against Iran in the early 1980s.

Many current Iraqi leaders were in exile in Iran and still have close ties with Tehran.

The release of the five has been portrayed in Iran as a victory for the Islamic Republic at a time when the government cracked down on protests.

The opposition claims the election, in which Ahmadinejad was declared



**This photo, taken by an individual not employed by the Associated Press, shows Iranian diplomats Abbas Hatami Kasavand, center, and Mohsen Bagheri, right, welcomed by their relatives as they arrive at Tehran's Mehrabad airport, Iran, Sunday, July 12, 2009. Five Iranian officials who were held in Iraq for more than two years by U.S. forces on suspicion of aiding local Shiite militants returned to Iran Sunday, where their return was hailed as a victory for Iran. The five diplomats flew to Tehran from Iraq on Sunday and were met at the airport by a cheering crowd of onlookers who carried the men on their shoulders and put garlands of flowers around their necks.**

(AP Photo/Yalda Moayyeri)

following the disputed June 12 presidential election and the ensuing government crackdown on protests.

The opposition claims the election, in which Ahmadinejad was declared



Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso's ruling party was certain to suffer a defeat Sunday in a Tokyo election seen as a crucial test of his popularity ahead of a nationwide vote, media reports said.

(AFP/File/Vincenzo Pinto)

## Japan PM's party suffers blow in Tokyo election: media

by Shingo Ito

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso's ruling party was certain to suffer a defeat Sunday in a Tokyo election seen as a crucial test of his popularity ahead of a nationwide vote, media reports said.

A drubbing in the Tokyo polls could increase internal party pressure on Aso to quit before general elections he must call by September, with the opposition seeking to end the ruling party's half-century of almost unbroken rule.

Aso's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and its coalition partner New Komeito were likely to lose their majority in Sunday's vote for the Tokyo metropolitan assembly, public broadcaster NHK and Kyodo News reported, based on their own projections.

The opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) looked set to win the most seats, forcing the LDP to slip from the assembly's largest party post for the first time in more than four decades, the news reports said.

Aso's ruling coalition acknowledged the apparent bloody nose from voters in the sprawling capital.

"We have to sincerely face the severe judgement from Tokyo residents," said senior LDP official Nobuteru Ishihara. □

# Ambushes kill 2 near Freeport's Indonesian mine

By ANTHONY DEUTSCH,  
Associated Press Writer

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Weekend ambushes blamed on separatist rebels killed two employees at the Indonesian mining complex of U.S. conglomerate Freeport, officials said Sunday, marking some of the worst violence in the restive Papua region in years.

A 29-year-old Australian mining expert was shot to death Saturday while traveling in a car just outside the company's massive Grasberg copper and gold mine, police said.

On Sunday, gunmen opened fire on two Freeport vehicles, killing a security guard and then ambushing police and anti-terrorist squads responding to the assault. At least seven others were injured in the three attacks.

Indonesian authorities blamed the violence on the Free Papua Movement, which has sought independence from the central government since the 1970s.

The escalation of tension in Papua, a highly militarized zone on the western half of New Guinea island, is an unwelcome development for Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who was re-elected just last week to a second 5-year term. It also raised questions about a possible resurgence of Papua's secessionist movement, which until recent months had shown few signs of life.

The rebels see PT Freeport as a symbol of Jakarta's rule and a reminder that foreign investment in the area has failed to lift their standard of living.

The mine, which employs thousands of local workers, is majority owned by Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold Inc. of Phoenix, Arizona, which posted revenue of nearly \$18 billion for 2008. The Indonesian government holds a minority stake in the Grasberg mine, and there is a production-sharing joint venture with the Rio Tinto Group.

The security guard, working on a contract for Freeport,

was killed Sunday morning when "shots were fired at two security vehicles," Freeport said in a statement. Five others were injured, but it was unclear who they were and how badly they were hurt.

Several police units, including an anti-terrorism detachment, responded.

"The attackers opened fire from distant hills, making it difficult for the police to return fire," said national police spokesman Sulistyio Ishakhe. Two police officers were hospitalized with gunshot wounds, he said.

The Australian mining expert was shot and killed on Saturday while traveling in a vehicle in the same area with three colleagues, PT Freeport said in a statement. The other people in the car were unharmed, leading police to conclude the shooter may have been a rebel sniper.

No arrests have been made in connection with the three ambushes, police said.

National lawmaker Yorris Raweyai, chairman of the Papua council, said the rising number of attacks was spreading fear among the local population even though they



Indonesian police officers man a security check point one day after an Australian employee of U.S. mining giant Freeport was shot to death by unknown assailants in Timika, Papua province, Indonesia, Sunday, July 12, 2009. A 40-member team of police and forensics specialists arrived Sunday to investigate the deadly shooting in restive Papua province, officials said.

(AP Photo)

have seen similar incidents in the past.

Two Americans and an Indonesian schoolteacher were killed in an ambush in 2002 in the same area of the recent clashes.

"The killing of a foreign worker in Papua will have bad implications," he said, calling for an independent investigation. "The enforcement of the security must be carried out seriously and professionally."

The low-level insurgency for an independent Papua has been a source of clashes with government troops since the region was transferred from Dutch to Indonesian rule in the 1960s. West Papua was taken over through a stage-managed vote by community leaders called the "Act of Free Choice," which has been widely dismissed by international scholars as a sham. □



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U.S. President Barack Obama greets supporters during a departure ceremony at the airport in Accra, July 11, 2009.

REUTERS/Jason Reed (GHANA POLITICS)

#### GHANA SUMMIT

**Continued from Page B1**

In Cape Coast, a 40-minute helicopter ride from Accra, any such qualms were swept away. In this one-time headquarters of Britain's Gold Coast slave

trade, Obama's likeness was everywhere on placards and billboards. Thousands jammed his motorcade route from the muddy soccer field where he landed to Cape Coast Castle — waving, cheering, chanting,

the women ululating, children climbing trees and clambering atop boxes for a better view. They wore T-shirts bearing his likeness, and his campaign motto "Yes We Can."

His wife, Michelle, the great-

great-granddaughter of slaves, was in the armored SUV beside him. His daughters, Malia, 11, and Sasha, 8, were along for the ride, also marveling at the sight.

As the motorcade pulled up at the castle, drummers kept up an insistent beat, and a PA announcer blared, "Let us welcome His Excellency, President Barack Obama!"

Inside the whitewashed fortress, the first family got a tour of the oven-like brick dungeons where slaves were crammed as they awaited their fate. The Obamas walked through the "Door of No Return" — the gateway through which thousands passed to ships bound for America — and paused in contemplation, arms around each others backs.

Afterward, the president called the castle "a place of profound sadness." He told reporters it put him in mind of Buchenwald, the German concentration camp he saw last month — evidence of "the capacity of human beings for

great evil."

Yet he also found it inspiring, and hoped Malia and Sasha would grasp its import. "It is here where the journey of much of the African-American experience began," he said.

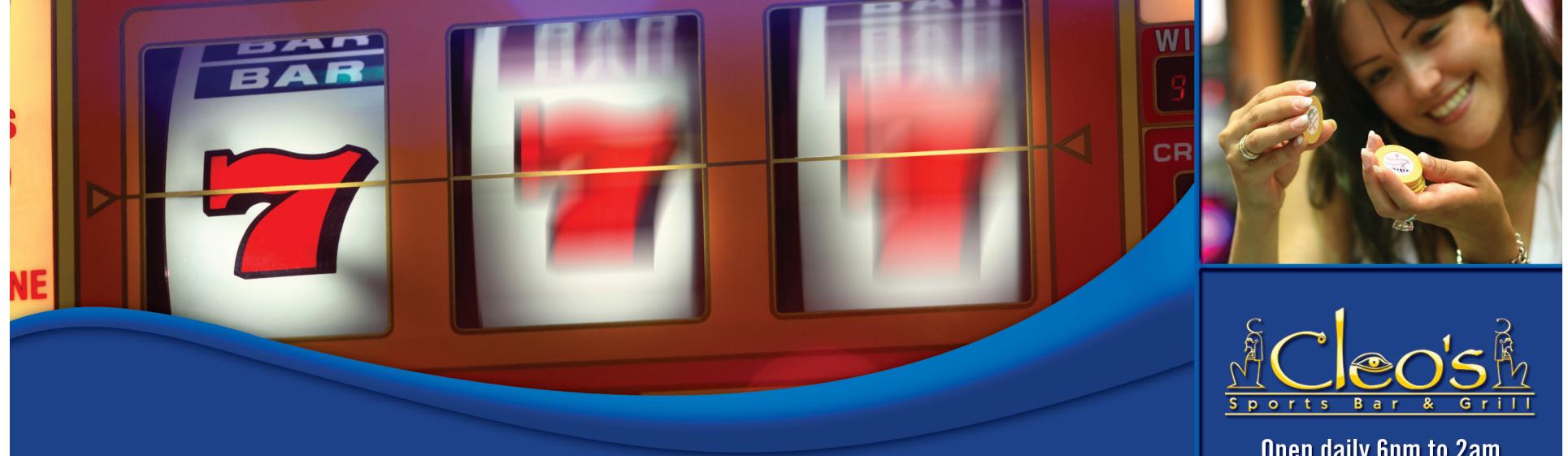
Back in Accra, after a quick hotel stop for a change of clothes, Obama took part in a final airport send-off, complete with drumming and twirling dancers in colorful tribal garb.

"Every day with its success, Ghana sends a simple message to the world, that democracy can thrive in Africa," Obama declared. "Great days lie ahead for this nation. The future is on Ghana's side."

Even President John Atta Mills, the unsentimental lawyer who took power in January, was ecstatic.

"There is not a single Ghanaian who is not excited by your visit," he enthused. "The good Lord has heard our prayers, and you have come."

Heady stuff for a young American president just six months on the job. □



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# Somalia clashes kill dozens, AU helps gov't forces

MOGADISHU, Somalia – Islamic insurgents fought their way toward Somalia's presidential palace Sunday in fighting that killed dozens and wounded about 150, officials said. African Union peacekeepers directly intervened for the first time to support government forces. An Associated Press reporter saw several bodies and two AU tanks on the front line. Government forces used rocket-propelled grenades and anti-aircraft guns mounted on the back of trucks, which they fired horizontally through the streets. The city's main Medina hospital was chaos, with bloodied nurses performing frantic triage and a tent set up outside to deal with the overflow of casualties. Screaming relatives begged for help and water for the wounded.

Medina hospital official Duniya Ali Mohamed said most of the wounded were women and children and that

hospital workers had not slept for the last 24 hours.

"These are the worst armed clashes in the capital for the last two months," she said. The AU was drawn into the fighting after the insurgents advanced into the north of the capital and directly threatened their positions, a spokesman said. The peacekeepers' direct involvement in fighting could increase the rate of attacks against them at a time when the government is desperately seeking more resources and manpower from the international community.

"Our troops were in an imminent danger, so we had to take some limited action," AU spokesman Bahoku Barigye said. "That does not mean we are fully involved in the combat."

The AU was forced to intervene after the insurgents fought their way to just over half a mile (1 kilometer) from the presidential palace, Mogadishu deputy mayor

Abdifitah Shawey said. The 4,300 beleaguered peacekeepers generally try to avoid being drawn into the conflict to preserve their neutrality. They defend the capital's port, airport and key government buildings.

Shawey said three government soldiers were killed. Government commander Salad Ali Jelleh said 40 insurgents had been killed, but did not specify how the bodies were identified. Official death tolls are notoriously unreliable and both sides have manipulated casualty figures in the past.

An unknown number of civilians were also killed. Ali Kamim, staggering into the street from a collapsed house, told a reporter for The AP he had been inside with his four children when it was hit by a mortar shell. When he regained consciousness, covered in dust and blood, all four were dead. The Islamists recently intensified their efforts to capture Mogadishu after an



Somali government forces stand next to their battle wagon during fighting between the Somali government forces and the al-Shabaab fighters Sunday, July 12, 2009 in Mogadishu, Somalia. African Union peacekeepers in the Somali capital have directly intervened for the first time to support government forces fighting Islamist insurgents, a spokesman said. A witness reported at least eight people were killed on the second day of fighting.

(AP Photo/Mohamed Sheikh Nor)

exiled leader returned in April and pulled the disparate insurgent factions together into an alliance.

Various Islamist groups have been fighting the U.N.-backed government since being chased from power 2 1/2 years ago.

The situation is complicated by the continual splintering and reforming of alliances and a tangled web of clan loyalties. The impoverished Horn of Africa nation has not had a functioning government for 18 years. □

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# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY

Tour de France 2009

# Lance Armstrong sees little change before Alps



TARBES, France -- Lance Armstrong believes the Tour de France lead won't change significantly until the race reaches the Alps in its third week.

The American was third after Sunday's ninth stage, eight seconds behind leader Rinaldo Nocentini, who is not seen as an overall threat. Alberto Contador, the 2007 champion

and Armstrong's Astana teammate, was six seconds back.

Pierrick Fedrigo of France sped past a lone rival in a breakaway to win the mountainous leg.

"There's not going to be a lot of change until Verbier," Armstrong said, referring to the 15th stage, a grueling 128.94-mile trek between Pontarlier and Verbier, Switzerland. "We'll have more moments there when we'll see who's truly the strongest."

"I think that's where the race is going to be decided," he added of the Alps.

"The combination of those days from Colmar all the way to the top of Ventoux 'on the penultimate stage' is a



very difficult six days. We'll wait. The hardest mountain in France is on the last day, basically. You can't forget that."

The race is shaping up as a two-man battle between the two Astana stars, primarily because the other pre-race favorites struggled in the time trials and are trailing badly.

The 37-year-old Armstrong was surprised when Contador attacked in the Pyrenees on Friday, making his move in the Andorran ski resort of Arcalis.

Asked if he could have easily followed the Spaniard, Armstrong said he preferred to be a team player.

"I wouldn't say that I could have easily followed, because it was an impressive attack,"

Armstrong said. "I probably could have gone, but I didn't see it coming and it wouldn't be correct for me to go across."

So, I waited for the other guys. I expected them to be able to pull it back and they didn't, but that's life, that's cycling, and I had to do the right thing."

The 26-year-old Contador has won all three Grand Tours of France, Italy and Spain -- a feat accomplished by only five riders. Armstrong isn't one of them.

Armstrong attacked early during Sunday's stage, a 99.7-mile trek from Saint-Gaudens to Tarbes taking riders up two climbs, including the Tourmalet pass -- one of the toughest ascents in professional cycling.

The American, a seven-time Tour champion, was soon joined by Nocentini and eased the pace to get back into the main peloton.

Riders will get their first rest day Monday after three punishing days in the Pyrenees. The race ends July 26 in Paris.

## Local favourite Szavay wins Budapest title by beating Schnyder



BUDAPEST — Agnes Szavay of Hungary won the Budapest Grand Prix on Sunday, rallying to beat Patty Schnyder of Switzerland 2-6, 6-4, 6-2 in the final.

It was Szavay's third WTA Tour singles title. Schnyder lost her serve twice in the first set but broke Szavay four times. In the second, the fourth-seeded Szavay broke decisively to lead 2-1, and then broke twice more in the decider.

"In the first set, I was too excited and that gave the set to the more experienced Patty," Szavay said. "I'm glad I managed to turn the score around and please the home crowd."

Schnyder was gracious in defeat.

"The game (Szavay) produced today was too strong for me," Schnyder said. "I tried my best but Agnes put too much pressure on me and my returns were not very good, either."

# Martin Kaymer wins second straight European even

LOCH LOMOND- Martin Kaymer closed with a two-under 69 Sunday to earn a two-stroke win at the Scottish Open.

Kaymer, who also won last week's Open de France, finished at 15-under-par 269 at Loch Lomond Golf Club. He joined Richard Sterne as the two back-to-back winners this season. Sterne won his crowns in South Africa in December.

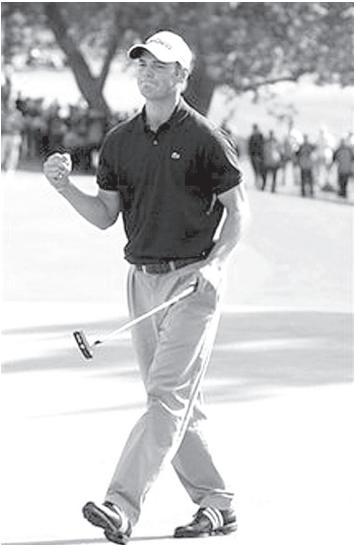
"If you win a tournament anywhere, you take something from it, especially coming here to Scotland, the home of golf, it is unbelievable to win here," Kaymer said.

Kaymer has now won four titles since January 2008 and this win vaults him inside the top 15 in the world rankings. Third-round leader Gonzalo Fernandez-Castano managed a one-over 72 in the final round. That left him in a share of second at minus-13. He was joined there by Raphael Jacquelin, who posted a five-under 66 Sunday. Fernandez-Castano is now a four-time runner-up this season.

Adam Scott (66) and Soren Kjeldsen (70) shared fourth at 12-under-par 272.

Kaymer birdied the third to move to 13-under and shared the lead with Fernandez-Castano after the Spaniard bogeyed the fourth.

Kaymer rolled in 22-footer for birdie on the sixth and he was tied for the lead with Retief Goosen at that point after



Goosen birdied five and six. The 24-year-old Kaymer parred No. 7 and was alone in the lead thanks to a bogey by Goosen on the same hole. Kaymer followed with a 17-foot birdie putt on the eighth. The German tripped to a bogey on the 11th, but bounced back with a birdie on the 13th and pushed his lead to three with a five-foot birdie putt on the par-four 15th.

Kaymer missed the 16th green and hit a poor chip to 30 feet. He two-putted for bogey from there, but was still two clear. Kaymer parred the final two to seal the win.

"I didn't play really well today. My short game was really good, which kept me up there all the time," stated Kaymer. "The last four holes are not easy and I managed to make birdie on 15 and that was huge."

Fernandez-Castano parred three straight before his bogey on the fourth. After that, he



parred eight in a row before tripping to another bogey on the 13th after a poor drive led to that dropped shot.

The Spaniard, who was going for his fifth tour title, got up and down for birdie on the 14th, but he could only par out to share second.

Jacquelin made his charge late. He carded just one birdie over his first 12 holes, then birdied four of five holes from the 13th to jump to 13-under. Goosen, who also played in the final group, stumbled to a two-over 73. That dropped him into a tie for sixth at 11-under-par 273. He was joined there by Nick Watney (67). Lee Westwood (71) and Ross Fisher (67) shared eighth place at minus-10. □

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		daily: 2:50			
matinee: 12:05					11:30
<input type="checkbox"/> PG-13	<b>TRANSFORMER 2</b>	6:00	9:00		
		matinee: 2:55			
					11:50
<input type="checkbox"/> R	<b>THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123</b>	7:10	9:30		
		daily: 2:50			
		matinee: 11:45			
<input type="checkbox"/> PG-13	<b>YEAR ONE</b>	5:00	7:10	9:15	
		matinee: 2:50			
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG-13	<b>TERMINATOR SALVATION</b>	8:15			
		matinee: 2:00			
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG	<b>ICE AGE 3 DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS</b>	4:15	6:15		
		matinee: 2:20			
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		matinee: 2:30			
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG-13	<b>THE PROPOSAL</b>	4:30	6:45	9:00	
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG	<b>ICE AGE 3 DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS</b>	4:00	6:00	8:00	
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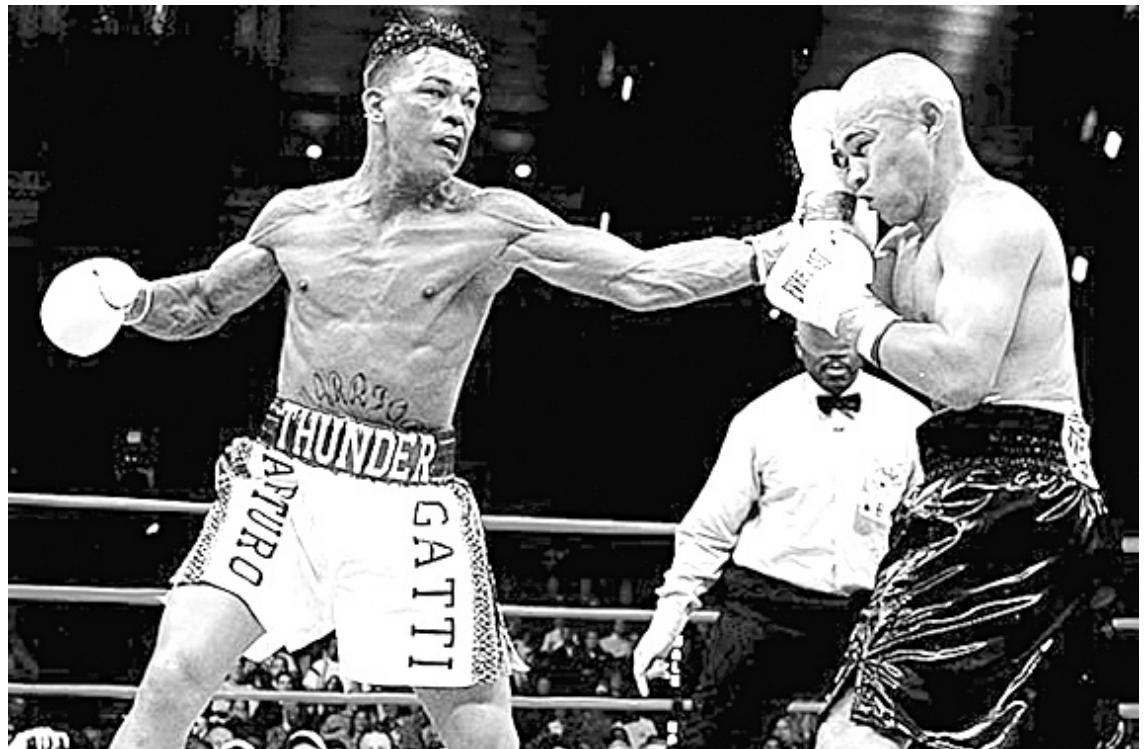


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# Police detain wife of former boxing champion Arturo Gatti



SAO PAULO — The wife of former boxing champion Arturo Gatti was detained as a suspect by Brazilian authorities

Sunday following his death at a posh seaside resort.

Police said 23-year-old Amanda Rodrigues was

taken into custody after contradictions in her interrogation. Gatti's body was found early Saturday in a hotel



room at the Porto de Galinhas resort in northeastern Brazil.

The former junior welterweight champion was apparently strangled with the strap of a purse, which was found at the scene with blood stains, said Milena Saraiva, a spokeswoman for the Pernambuco state civil police. She told The Associated Press that the Canadian also had a head injury.

The investigation was not complete, but Saraiva said authorities were preparing to present a formal accusation against Rodrigues, who denied being involved in her husband's death.

Police said Rodrigues, a Brazilian, could not explain how she spent nearly 10 hours in the room without noticing that Gatti was already dead.

Police were investigating witness reports that the couple fought and Gatti was

drunk when he returned to his room Friday night, Saraiva said, adding that police were told the pair were extremely jealous of each other and that he constantly complained of her clothing when she traveled to Brazil.

Acelino "Popo" Freitas, a four-time world champion Brazilian boxer, told Globo TV's Web site on Saturday that he was a close friend of Gatti and his wife and that he "knew they were having some sort of problem and were about to separate."

The couple's 1-year-old son, who was unhurt, was with Rodrigues' sister, Saraiva said.

The 37-year-old Gatti, whose epic trilogy with Micky Ward branded him one of the most exciting fighters of his generation, retired in 2007 with a career record of 40-9 and 31 knockouts. □

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# Family, friends, fans say goodbye to slain Steve McNair



HATTIESBURG — Fellow NFL players, close friends and former coaches on Saturday remembered Mt. Olive native Steve McNair as a man whose life included a humble beginning and was characterized by an outstanding athletic talent superseded only by a compassion for others. The portrait of a man who touched the lives of thousands through his charitable foundation and annual youth football camps in Mississippi and Tennessee contrasted

starkly with the violent act that took his life.

McNair, 36, was killed July 4 in Nashville by 20-year-old Sahel Kazemi, who Nashville police said he had been dating for several months. Kazemi then turned the gun on herself. Both were found dead in a downtown Nashville condominium.

NFL coaches and former players from McNair's days as a quarterback with the Tennessee Titans and Baltimore Ravens, Titans

Coach Jeff Fisher and hundreds of dignitaries were among the estimated 5,000 who attended yesterday's funeral for McNair at Reed Green Coliseum on the University of Southern Mississippi campus.

They remembered McNair, who lived in Nashville but was raised in a small town 45 miles north of Hattiesburg, as someone with an "infectious grin," a humble man who cared for his family back in Mississippi, loved to laugh and possessed a passionate



zeal for life.

At the beginning of the two-hour funeral, McNair's wife, Mechelle, her face shielded by a wide-brimmed black hat, clutched the hands of her two young sons and followed her husband's closed silver casket covered with white flowers as it was placed in the center of the coliseum.

McNair's mother, Lucille of Mt. Olive, his four brothers and two older sons followed behind and were seated in front of the casket on the front row of several hundred chairs reserved for family and close friends.

The family gazed at larger-than-life color photos that showcased McNair's athletic ability and his wide smile mentioned throughout the funeral. One photo depicted the former NFL great dressed in a suit as he held a football.

In another, he stood smiling next to his 2003 MVP trophy. A third photo showed McNair in the uniform of the Baltimore Ravens, the last team he played for prior to retirement in 2008. Mechelle McNair swayed slightly to gospel music while cuddling her youngest son,

Trenton, who buried his head in her lap during the two-hour service.

Among the flower arrangements surrounding the stage were several in blue and silver, the colors of McNair's beloved Titans, where he spent the majority of his NFL career. Many stands were decorated purple, white and gold, the school colors of Mt. Olive High School and Alcorn State University. Flowers were also sent from Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones.

Stirring eulogies that were often halted by tears came from men who played with or coached McNair during his 13-year pro football career, including Baltimore Ravens linebacker Ray Lewis, Titans quarterback coach Craig Johnson and Vince Young, McNair's successor as the Titans' quarterback.

All focused on McNair's community spirit and genuine love for his family. He was remembered for never allowing fame and fortune to change his basic nature from someone who thought of everyone as deserving of his time. □



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# Gobierno interino hondureño suspende toque de queda

TEGUCIGALPA— El gobierno de facto del presidente Roberto Micheletti anunció que a partir del domingo suspendió el toque de queda impuesto tras el derrocamiento del mandatario Manuel Zelaya. En un comunicado leído en cadena de radio y televisión, el gobierno informó que la medida se toma luego de que el toque de queda de las últimas dos semanas ha “devuelto calma a la población” y ayudó a reducir los índices delictivos.

La administración interina impuso la medida excepcional luego del golpe de estado y expulsión de Zelaya por parte de los militares el 28 de junio, en un hecho que sumergió a este país centroamericano en una profunda crisis política y polarización.

El toque de queda se aplicaba desde las 11.00 de la noche a las 4:30 de la madrugada,

por lo que el país recobra la actividad normal a partir de la noche del domingo.

“En virtud de haberse alcanzado los objetivos de esta disposición, de haber devuelto la calma a la población, el gobierno informa al pueblo y a la comunidad internacional que a partir del 12 de julio se suspende el toque de queda”, destaca la nota oficial.

El gobierno interino agradeció a la población por acatar la medida, aplaudida por algunos en las calles pero puesta en duda por los seguidores de Zelaya.

La suspensión del toque de queda “es para dar a entender al mundo que hay un ambiente de libertad en el país”, reaccionó en una entrevista Juan Barahona, coordinador nacional del Bloque Popular y miembro del movimiento contra el golpe a Zelaya. Pero

“la represión de los golpistas

continúa”.

“No es más que una medida impulsada por los dueños de los negocios nocturnos que estaban perdiendo dinero. Aquí la libertad y la democracia se restablecerán cuando retorne Zelaya”, agregó.

Guillermo Quintanilla, un taxista de 50 años, reaccionó feliz al enterarse de la medida. “Gracias a Dios. Mucha gente que trabaja de noche no lo podía hacer”.

El anuncio coincidió con denuncias de comunicadores venezolanos del canal de televisión Telesur de que fueron detenidos por la policía la noche del sábado y liberados en horas de la madrugada, en un incidente que el embajador Armando Laguna calificó como un “acoso”.

“Esta mañana se ha levantado el toque de queda. Hay libertad de tránsito,



hay libertad de movimiento.

Entonces, ¿Cuál es el amedrentamiento?”, se quejó el embajador venezolano.

El ministro de Información René Zepeda rechazó que se esté buscando coartar el trabajo de la prensa internacional, y que en Honduras “lo que queremos es paz”.

El levantamiento del toque de queda se da dos días después que delegados de Zelaya y

de Micheletti se reunieron en Costa Rica bajo la mediación del presidente de ese país, Oscar Arias, en un esfuerzo por buscar una salida a la crisis. No obstante, la primera ronda de la negociación no arrojó resultados concretos y las partes mantuvieron posiciones diferentes sobre el posible retorno al poder de Zelaya, el punto central del diálogo. □



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